

Volunteer Services Annual Report 2011

City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks

A very important way OSMP connects with the community is by providing an opportunity for people to give back to the land in a meaningful way. In 2011, 1,100 volunteers contributed over 25,950 hours. OSMP volunteers greet visitors on trails, monitor wildlife, lead interpretive hikes, restore natural habitats, pull noxious weeds, build trails, monitor rare plants, and help staff in a variety of other ways. OSMP volunteers provide inspiration to staff and community members alike.

Stewardship Projects include one-day projects such as National Trails Day, Pick-Up-Poop Derby (PUP Derby), and the Trash Bash, as well as both short and long-term group projects by organizations and businesses in the community. In 2011 some of these included AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC), Jail Crews, Wildlands Restoration Volunteers (WRV), Webroot Software, Sierra Club, Flatiron Climbing Council (FCC), CU Sewall Hall, CU Gold Leadership Program, various Eagle Scout groups, Google, AmeriCorps, New Vista High School, Only Natural Pet Store, Friends Interested in Dogs on Open Space (FIDOS), and many more.

13,788 Hours

Volunteer Naturalists provide interpretive nature programs for all ages, on trails and in classrooms. The 60 hour training runs February through April. In 2011, Volunteer Naturalists provided 270 programs, reaching thousands of people. Through education comes understanding of the land and sound stewardship. This program began in 1995.

2,061 Hours

Nesting Raptor Monitors enjoy the unique and rare opportunity to monitor courtship, nest development and fledging of Front Range birds of prey. This program, which started in 1985, is a model for the country. Volunteers commit to a four-hour shift each week, February through July. In 2011, the 57 volunteers made over 642 site visits.

2,470 Hours

Bat Monitors venture out at dusk to ponds and known bat roosts. They perform auditory and visual population counts for two consecutive nights a month, June through September. Information gathered aids resource conservation decisions. Both Mallory and Harmon roost sites are monitored. This program started in 1995. In 2011, 51 volunteers made 97 site visits.

1,150 Hours

BearCare Team members educate Boulder citizens about living safely with bears. Information is primarily dispersed door to door, providing education for neighborhoods where bear activity has occurred. These volunteers also occasionally assist OSMP Rangers and Division of Wildlife officers by “bearsitting” bears that come into town.

63 Hours

Native Garden Team members plan, plant, and maintain the Ann Armstrong Memorial Native Garden at the Chautauqua Ranger Cottage. At this demonstration garden, all of the plants are native, and are labeled for educational purposes. The garden has been recognized as a valuable regional resource, so while working in the garden, volunteers also provide information on native gardening to hundreds of interested visitors.

330 Hours

Hayfield Monitors play a vital role in protecting rare birds that nest in our grasslands. Volunteers survey hayfields at dusk or dawn, during May and June, collecting data on bird species of concern. They walked set transects through fields during the breeding season, taking note of grassland bird species. Their data helps staff plan for better protection of the nesting birds. This program started in 2006.

60 Hours

Herbarium and Rare Plant Monitors support conservation of native ecosystems by observing, inventorying, collecting and adding plant specimens found on our lands to the OSMF herbarium. They meet on an as- needed basis, and also help maintain and encourage active use of the collection.

40 Hours

Trail Guides have been traveling OSMF trails for 20 years, covering many thousands of miles each year. They enhance and promote positive visitor experiences. The Trail Guides program has 47 active participants. They provide visitor information on area features, natural and cultural history, seasonal changes, policies, safety, regulations and more. They also assist those in need, and serve as extra “eyes and ears” on the system.

1,124 Hours

Bike Patrollers assist, educate and inform bikers and other trail users, helping to increase visitor compliance and promote positive sustainable experiences on the land. Patrollers assist visitors and provide information to participating agencies. Partners include: US Forest Service (USFS), Boulder County Parks and Open Space (BCPOS) and Boulder MountainBike Alliance (BMA).

1,115 Hours

Hosts: Flagstaff Summit Nature Center, Ranger Cottage, Meadow Music, and Community Events Hosts greet the public and provide information and education, reaching thousands of visitors. The Flagstaff Summit Nature Center is staffed 100% by volunteers. They provide information and share interactive exhibits on weekends, May through October. This year they had 2,220 visits. Volunteers also assist at the Ranger Cottage and at numerous community events such as Meadow Music.

380 Hours

Staff Assistants and Interns provide support with individual research and field work in numerous areas, including native plant conservation, cultural resources, administration, maintenance and outreach.

1,216 Hours

Trails Accessibility Assistants

Five volunteers from Naropa helped measure how accessible trails currently are, assisting with updating OSMP's on-line Trails Accessibility Guide. Engineering students from Colorado School of Mines also helped by designing a device that can be clipped onto a wheelchair for easier measurements.

165 Hours

Open Space Board of Trustees, appointed by City Council, research issues, advise on policy, and recommend actions on OSMP land purchases.

1,000 Hours

If you are interested in volunteering and would like to see a listing of volunteer opportunities, go to our web page at www.bouldercolorado.gov/osmpvolunteers

Group Stewardship Volunteer Highlights:

2011 Volunteer Accomplishments:

- Wildland Restoration Volunteers (WRV) planted and watered hundreds of shrubs and removed Russian olive trees and chipped tree materials at the Colorado Open Lands property. They also assisted staff in the annual Mediterranean Sage removal project on East Beach. The WRV restoration project on South Boulder Creek involved stream bank stabilization, planting shrubs and installation of buck and rail fence.
- Two AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) teams worked with OSMP for four months. They helped with removing invasive Mediterranean sage; assisted staff in hauling up the Mallory Cave bat gate materials; assisted with trail construction on the Green Bear and Greenbrier Trail reroutes; maintained numerous irrigation ditches and laterals; and assisted the Forestry Crew at Shanahan and Flatirons Vista.
- Local community Stewardship groups participated in a number of projects. These include the University of Colorado's Sewell Hall; a CU environmental writing course; the CU Gold Leadership Program; New Vista High School; Third Way Residential School in Denver; International Visitor Leadership Program; Only Natural Pet Store; Webroot Software; and the Sierra Club.
- Five Eagle Scouts completed projects on OSMP properties; most projects included trail work to make trails more accessible.
- Fifty individuals who needed community service hours chose to work with OSMP.
- At the annual Pick-Up Poop (PUP) Derby (Boulder City Improvement Association 2), volunteers cleaned up at both Dry Creek and Mount Sanitas.
- Pictures and profiles of recent volunteer projects at www.bouldercolorado.gov/osmpvolunteers

What to look for in 2012:

- More AmeriCorps crews.
- More Jail Crews.
- More Volunteer Trail Work Days.